

The Secret

by Sierral

Category: Harry Potter

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2000-01-27 09:00:00

Updated: 2001-01-29 09:00:00

Packaged: 2016-04-27 12:37:23

Rating: K+

Chapters: 5

Words: 15,260

Publisher: [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

Summary: Hermione learns some important lessons in friendship. My first ever fan fic!

## 1. The Malfoy Archives: The Secret 1.0

The Secret

By Sierra

Chapter 1: The Sorting

" Bye Mom, bye Dad! See you next summer!" Hermione Granger ducked through the barrier to platform 9 and 3/4 to board the Hogwarts express, her trolley dragging along behind her. "At least I wasn't stupid enough to take as many subjects as last year," she muttered to herself. The wicker carrier perched on top of her trunk shook as the large ginger cat inside of it thrashed wildly. "I'll let you out on the train, Crookshanks," she murmured, her eyes scanning the crowd. "Where are they?" she muttered. Suddenly, she caught a flash of red hair out of the corner of her eye. "Ron!" she called, waving and pushing her trolley over to where he stood. "Where's Harry?" she asked. "I dunno," he replied, shrugging. "He'd better get here soon, though, the train's going to leave." He turned around to look at the barrier.

"Let's put our stuff on the train and come back to wait for him," she said reasonably. They stowed their trunks, Crookshanks basket, and Ron's minute owl (a gift from Sirius) in an empty compartment and went back out to wait for him. At about 10:59, one minute before the train was scheduled to depart, Harry came stumbling through the barrier, panting.

"Where were you?" Hermione exclaimed as they pushed his trolley towards their compartment door.

"Yeah," Ron said. "Those muggles trying to make you late?"

"Yup," Harry replied, frowning. "You'd think they'd be happy to get rid of me. They hate me after all."

"At least you got here on time, barely," Ron said, pushing Harry's trunk onboard.

"Thank goodness," Hermione exclaimed. The train's whistle sounded and they got on and shut the door as the train started to move.

"So," Hermione said once they had sat down. "How was your summer, Harry?"

"It was weird, I mean, nothing happened! The Dursleys wouldn't let me out of the house, except when I left to get my school supplies. When I told them I had a godfather who was a convicted murderer on the run, they didn't talk to me either. Other than that, nothing happened!"

"Maybe this means we'll have a nice, normal year for once," Hermione said.

"NO WAY!" they both cried, grinning.

"Ohhhh," she groaned. "Why do you always get in trouble?" They just grinned.

"It's too bad the World Cup got postponed until next year. Who'd thought that the whole team would get sick!" Ron exclaimed.

His complaining was cut short by the smiling witch with the food cart. They all crowded around to get something. After settling back down, they started discussing their summers again. Just as Hermione was about to say something, the compartment door slid open and there stood none other than their sworn enemy, Draco Malfoy and his pea-brained sidekicks, Vincent Crabbe and Gregory Goyle. Hermione couldn't help but notice something seemed to be upsetting Malfoy. "Good," she thought to herself.

"So," he said in his usual drawl. "It's the wuss team; Potty, Weasel, and the mudblood." Crabbe and Goyle snickered.

"What do you want Malfoy?" Harry said, all three of them standing to face the three Slytherins.

"Oh, nothing," he replied, "Just to let you know there won't be any dementors around. You don't have to worry about fainting." He smirked. "Though it did make a nice show."

Harry pulled out his wand and advanced, but before he could do anything there was a loud hissing and the top of Crookshanks' basket flew open. The large cat leaped out and flew straight at Draco, attaching itself to his robes. Draco let out a scream and flung the cat away, then the three hurried out.

"Good Crookshanks," Hermione murmured, picking him up and stroking his ginger fur.

The rest of the trip passed uneventfully. When the train pulled into Hogsmeade station, they got and climbed into one of the awaiting carriages, stopping only to wave to Hagrid, who was directing the 1st

years. Once inside Hogwarts, they followed the crowd into the Great Hall and sat down at the Gryffindor table.

"Do you know," Harry said, leaning over to her and Ron, "This is the 1st time I've ever actually seen the sorting?"

"Maybe if you stayed out of trouble, you would more often," she said, smiling.

"I can't help it," he replied, grinning back.

A hush fell over the hall as Professor McGonagall set up the stool and sorting hat in front of a line of scared 1st years. After it's song, each student tried it on and went to sit down at their designated table. After they were done, Professor McGonagall stepped up and announced "We have one more new student, a new 4th year, Celeste Drexel from Dovehart Academy of Witchcraft in New Hampshire, USA." The girl standing behind the Professor had shoulder length silver-blond hair, piercing gray eyes and a small, pointed face. As Hermione watched, the girl stepped forward and sat down, placing the hat on her head.

"SLYTHERIN," it bellowed, and she stood up and went over to the Slytherin table.

"Does she look familiar?" Hermione whispered to Harry and Ron.

"Yeah," Harry said, looking puzzled. "But I can't figure out where I've seen her before."

"Oh well," she said, and began to fill her plate with the food that had appeared on the table.

After they had sung the school song, they followed the other Gryffindors to the common room. After walking into her dorm room, she realized how tired she was. As she changed and sank into bed, all thoughts of the mysterious new girl left her head.

A/N: Well, here's part 1 of my first fan fic! Please review, I'll get part two up depending on whether I get good reviews on this part. So, do ya like? I hope so!

Disclaimer: Harry Potter, Hermione Granger, Ron Weasley and any other possibly mentioned characters are property of J. K. Rowling, not me. Don't sue me! I don't have anything you'd want anyway. Celeste Drexel and the Dovehart Academy remain my property. Don't take them without my permission, blah, blah, blah.

## 2. New Acquaintances

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Chapter 2: New Acquaintances

The next morning at breakfast, schedules were being passed out.

"What do we have this morning?" Ron asked through a mouthful of bacon.

"Swallow, Ron," Hermione replied, surveying her schedule. "We've got Transfiguration, and then double Potions with the Slytherins."

"Oh, what fun," Harry exclaimed, sarcastically.

Hermione filled her plate and turned the conversation towards the mysterious new girl.

"She looks nice," Harry speculated.

"She's a Slytherin, Harry!" Ron exclaimed, looking at Harry as though he had just sprouted horns and a tail.

"What does that have to do with anything? Some Slytherins have to be nice."

"None that we've met so far," Ron muttered.

"Oh, drop it," said Hermione, "We've got to get to class."

With a few grumbles, they gathered their books and trudged out of the Great Hall.

Transfigurations passed by reasonably quickly. This year they were working on bringing small, inanimate objects to life. Even Hermione thought this to be tricky.

After class they quickly made their way down to the Potions dungeon. They got there with plenty of time to spare and grabbed a worktable on the Gryffindor side of the room. As class started Snape strode into the room, his long green robes sweeping behind him. The new girl, Celeste, followed him in, looking apprehensive.

"As you may have heard," Snape said in his quiet, yet demanding voice, "We have a new student, Celeste Drexel." Celeste looked around the room, her gray eyes glittering. "Celeste, you will be partnering withâ€¦" he glanced around the room evilly, "Hermione Granger. Excuse me for breaking up your little group, Miss. Granger," he said with an evil smile. Celeste walked over and plopped down in the seat next to Hermione, ignoring the snickers and sympathetic glances of the other students.

"Today we will be working on creating a simple freezing potion," Snape continued. "I think most of you can handle such a simple task," he said, giving Neville a sinister stare. The class shuffled around, getting out quills and parchment as he continued his instructions. When he was done they got to work.

"Do you like Prof. Snape?" Celeste asked once they had gotten all of their ingredients.

"NO," Hermione said, shocked. "He hates all Gryffindors, especially, Harry, Ron, and me."

"He doesn't seem that bad to me," she replied, looking up at Hermione through a curtain of pale-blond hair.

"You're a Slytherin," Hermione said pointedly, adding the final ingredient and sitting down.

"Having a nice conversation, Miss. Granger?" Snape called from the front of the room. "That's 5 points from Gryffindor."

"See my point?" Hermione grumbled, giving Snape's back a murderous glance. "We have to let this simmer," She continued, ending the conversation.

When class was finally over, Hermione gathered her books and hurried out of the room to catch up with Harry and Ron. As they walked, talking about how unfair Snape was, Hermione heard a voice calling her from behind.

"Hey, Hermione, wait up!" the voice called. Hermione turned to see none other than Celeste Drexel rushing to catch up with her, her hair in complete disarray around her pointed face.

"You guys go on without me," Hermione said, waving them in the direction of the Great Hall. "I'll be there in a minute or two."

"Okay!" Harry replied, casting a curious glance in Celeste's direction.

Hermione turned around to face Celeste as she caught up to her. She was aware of the curious glances sent her way by Gryffindors and Slytherins alike.

"Yes?" Hermione said, staring questionably at the other girl.

"Um, you're pretty good at Charms, right?" she asked nervously.

"Yeah, why?" Hermione replied.

"I'm kind of having trouble. At Dovehart we hadn't learned most of the spells you already know here. Could you help me learn them?" Celeste looked nervous, shifting from one foot to the other and looking around her.

"Sure," Hermione replied, pleased at being asked for help, although, she was curious as to why a Slytherin was asking her for help! "how about we meet in the library after dinner?"

"Thanks!" Celeste said with a grateful expression. "If I don't get caught up my mum'll kill me! Charms was her strong point. Well, I gotta go!" And with that, she hurried off to the Great Hall.

AS she sat down in her usual place in front of Harry, he and Ron bombarded her with questions.

"What'd she want?"

"What's she like?"

"Hold on and let me eat something, I'm starved. And I have a long night of tutoring to prepare for." She filled her plate and looked up at Harry's curious stare and Ron's shocked one.

"You're helping a\_ Slytherin\_?" Ron asked, bewildered. "Why??"

"Calm down Ron," Harry said, still looking at Hermione. "Why are you though?"

"Because she needs help," she answered slowly, as if she was speaking to two two-year-olds instead of two 14-year-olds. "She asked pretty nicely, actually," she continued, eating hungrily as Harry and Ron stared.

"\_Nicely\_?" Ron inquired. " A \_Slytherin\_ asked a Gryffindor for help \_nicely\_?"

"That's what I said. Seems there's actually a nice Slytherin for once. I wonder what Snape would say! Now, if you don't mind, I'd like to eat my lunch in peace." Ron and Harry looked down at their own food and lunch continued in quiet.

The rest of the day flew by for Hermione, and soon it was dinner. Hermione left the table early, saying that she had to pick up some of her old Charms books to take with her.

After picking up the books and leaving the Gryffindor tower, Hermione headed to the library. When she got there she was surprised to see Celeste already there, at a table in the corner, pouring over a thick textbook.

"You're here early," Hermione exclaimed, setting her bag down.

"So are you," Celeste said pointedly, looking up. "I wasn't hungry. Some of those Slytherins make me lose my appetite."

"I understand. Draco Malfoy does that to me all the time. That little gitâ€¦"

"Oh, I know. I hate him. He's just like his father, biased and annoying," Celeste said, rolling her eyes.

"You've met Lucius Malfoy?" Hermione questioned.

"Um, yeah. He works for the Ministry. My mum brought me to work one day, and he brought Draco. " She looked down at her book again.

"I thought you lived in America? Isn't that where you went to school?" Hermione inquired.

"That's where I went to school, yeah. But, I've always lived in England. My mum went to school at Dovehart her 1st through 3rd year. She wanted me to go there too. It isn't easy to commute across seas, though, so I transferred to Hogwarts this year. It's a lot easier.

"It must be," Hermione said. Getting out her third year Charms book. "Want to get started? I thought this would be a good place to begin," she said, opening the book. The conversation soon turned to Charms.

After about an hour of studying, Celeste was a little more confident about her Charms.

"Could we study again? I'm also a little behind in Potions. Snape may like Slytherins, but he'll kill me if I can't get them right. My parents will too." She grimaced and gathered her books together. "Do you mind if I borrow this?" she said holding up the third year Charms book.

"No, go ahead," Hermione replied, getting her own books together. "What does your dad do, work I mean."

"They're, um, divorced. He lives in Scotland on a Ministry job." She brushed her hair back and clipped it in place. "I have to go, it's getting late." She walked out of the library and towards her dorm.

Hermione stared after her, her mind thinking things over. "Hmmm," she thought. "Seems I've made a new friend. Wonder what Harry and Ron'll say!" She walked off to her own dorm, smiling to herself.

A/N: I did it!!! I got it up!!! I've had so many uploading probs. I'm about to put my foot through the monitor. I'm almost done part three, so hold on! So sorry for the delay, and as always, review, but no flames please! I burn my bad tests with them!

### 3. Quidditch and seekers and Malfoy, oh my!

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#### Chapter 3: Quidditch Excitements

As the days progressed, Hermione found herself and Celeste spending more and more time together. In Potions, they were nearly always partners, much to the surprise of the other Gryffindors and Slytherins. Ron found this rather disturbing.

"But she's a \_Slytherin\_!" he nearly shouted in the Gryffindor common room one evening. Hermione had just returned from the library where she and Celeste had been studying for the next days Potions exam. Ron's outburst caused half the common room to look over in surprise. Even Fred and George looked up from planning their next prank to see what was going on.

"Who's a Slytherin?" Fred asked. Or was it George?

"Hermione's new best friend, that's who," Ron spat out with disgust. Harry just watched from his chair with mild interest.

"That new girl? What's her name- Celeste?" George asked.

"Yeah, we heard the Slytherin team talking about her. Seems she can really fly, better than Malfoy!" Fred responded.

"Great, that's all I need," Harry groaned. "A Slytherin player who can actually\_ play\_!" He slumped down further in his chair.

"Don't worry, Harry, she doesn't cheat like Malfoy does," Hermione said.

"I hope not, Malfoy's ad enough!" He groaned again. "Speaking of which, Quidditch try-outs are coming up. Are you trying out Ron? We need a new keeper."

"Great! When are try-outs?" Ron exclaimed.

"Friday afternoon," Fred answered. "What do you think, George. Can he replace Oliver?"

"Not as big. He'll need practice," George replied. He and Fred circled Ron like hawks eyeing their prey. "I suppose he'll do, though," he said finally. Ron rolled his eyes.

"Yeah, sure, whatever. Now, if you're done, I'm going to bed. We have a Potions test tomorrow.

"Oh, lucky you," George said sarcastically. "Yes, I suppose you can go. We're done now." He and Fred wandered off, muttering to each other.

Ron walked off towards the 4th year boys' dorm and Harry got up and followed him out.

The room was emptying out quickly, and soon it was empty, save her and three 7th years. Sighing, she gathered up her books and headed off to bed herself.

The next day in Potions, Hermione wandered in earlier than usual. She had gotten up earlier to have more time to review for the test. She had also eaten earlier than most of the other students. She had just returned from getting her books, and was surprised, however, to see Celeste already in her seat. She was obviously fuming.

"What's up?" Hermione asked, taking her usual seat next to her.

"Oh, nothing. Malfoy was just bragging about his stupid Firebolt all through breakfast. Daddy gives his little boy everything, doesn't he?" She turned to Hermione with a big, fake, smile on her face.

"I've heard you're quite a flyer. You should try out for Quidditch on Friday. You'd make a great seeker." Hermione said with a grin.

"That'd show Draco! I do happen to have a Nimbus 2000 in storage in my trunk. Yes, I think I will. Thanks, Hermione!"

"No problem. Now, did you go over freezing potions?" by that time, more people had begun to filter into the room. Hermione looked up from their discussion of potions to see Draco cast a satisfied smirk in Celeste's direction. Luckily, Celeste hadn't seen it. Hermione ignored Malfoy and continued talking, waiting for the class to begin.



Potions passed, though too slowly for Hermione's tastes. The rest of the week flew by reasonably quickly, and soon it was the Friday of the try-outs. Hermione joined Harry and Ron out on the field where Harry was taking a couple of warm-up shots at Ron. She had come to cheer Ron on, but also to watch Celeste, who would be trying out for the Slytherin team right after Ron.

Since the only position open was that of keeper, Gryffindor try-outs passed fairly quickly. Katie, Alicia, and Angelina each had 5 shots at Ron with the quaffle. He stopped all but 1, but that was because his shoe had gotten caught in the broom twigs. By the time they were done, the Slytherin team was already beginning to trickle onto the field.

"Are you coming with us, Hermione?" Harry called up to her in the stands. He, Ron, Fred and George were planning on sneaking into Hogsmeade with the Marauders Map to celebrate Ron's success.

"Nah, I'm going to stay here a while. I'll see you later."

"If you're sure," Harry shrugged and turned to catch up with the Weasleys. Hermione turned her attention to the Slytherin team down below. She saw Celeste walk on, chatting with one of the Chasers. She looked up and saw Hermione watching from the stands.

"Hey," she called, running up to where Hermione was sitting. "You came!"

"You didn't really think I'd miss it, did you? After all, it was my idea that you try out!"

"You're right. Wish me luck!" Celeste hopped down to the field where the team was gathered.

The process by which their try-outs went by was different for the Slytherin team. Since Celeste was a good flyer, she wanted to be seeker. Naturally, this didn't float well with Draco.

"But that's my position!" he claimed. He glared at Celeste, who glared right back. If looks could kill, both would have been dead and buried.

"We'll have a competition. Whoever wins is seeker, whoever loses is the replacement," their captain said. A slow smirk spread across Draco's face.

"Fine by me," he said in his slow drawl. Celeste's eyes narrowed.

"Sure, lets start," she said slowly.

"Fine. Turn around and face the stands. When I say go, turn around. The first to catch the Snitch wins. Okay, turn around."

They both turned to face where Hermione was sitting. Celeste smiled up at her and winked. Draco just glared at her. Hermione saw the captain let loose the Snitch behind them. The winged ball rocketed off, ricocheting off the polls. After about a minute, the captain yelled, "Okay!" Celeste and Draco simultaneously hopped on their

brooms and took off.

As soon as they were in the air, Draco swiped at Celeste in attempts to knock her off her broom. Luckily, Celeste had anticipated this and swerved. She then darted off after the Snitch. It took Draco a few seconds to regain his balance, so even on a Firebolt he was behind her. The Snitch made a quick swerve and Celeste darted after it. She reached out her hand to grab it, and almost had it, but at the last second Draco grabbed her foot. With a small cry, Celeste swung her other foot back, hitting Draco squarely in the chest. He yelped and let go. She surged after the Snitch, which was hurtling downward. Her fingers closed on it just in time for her to straighten out her broom and topple softly onto the grass.

Hermione cheered from her seat, ignoring the glares some of the Slytherins sent her way. Draco landed a few feet away from her. His usually pale face had a pink tinge to it, and his eyes could have frozen rivers. He was gripping his broom handle so hard in knuckles were white. Without even looking at Hermione, he turned and stormed off. Hermione shuddered; she'd never seen him look that angry!

Her thinking was cut short when an excited Celeste rushed over. "I made it!!!" she yelled. "And on a Nimbus!"

"You've got talent, he only has a better broom," Hermione replied.

"C'mon, lets celebrate!" Celeste shouted, grabbing Hermione's hand and pulling her towards the school.

"H-how," Hermione asked slowly, almost afraid of the answer.

"I've got some fireworks in my trunk, c'mon!"

Hermione relented and let Celeste pull her to the school. She ended up having a great time. She had to admit, it felt good to break the rules sometimes. They planted Filibuster fireworks in Filches office with help of the Weasley twins, who were back by that time. They even gave a few to Peeves, telling him to 'have fun'. He did.

The next morning, at breakfast, they found out what he had done with them. It started out normal.

Fireworks shot out in all directions, coming from under the teacher's table. They all jumped back in surprise. Hermione had to admit, Prof. McGonagall looked funny sprawled out on the floor. The fireworks exploded in the air, the colorful explosions raining down from the ceiling like confetti, showering the hall with carnival light. One shot through the open window, lighting up the sky with orange light. Hermione noticed Prof. Dumbledore had a hard time keeping a straight face. Hagrid wasn't even trying. His laughter boomed throughout the Great Hall. Hermione herself also had a hard time not going hysterical. She noticed that Celeste and the Weasley twins did too. As soon as things calmed down, Dumbledore stood up.

"I would like to know who's behind this," he asked everyone evenly, though Hermione could see an amused glint in his eyes. He looked around the hall at everyone. A faint 'pop' was heard and Peeves appeared. He cackled maniacally and whizzed from the room. Dumbledore burst out laughing. Pretty soon, everyone was, even stern McGonagall.

"Well, that was an interesting wake-up call, but now," he waved his wand, restoring the hall, " it's time for class. Off you trot!"

As everyone filed from the Great Hall, Celeste and Hermione exchanged looks. Peeves would never tell that it was them. He'd rather take all the credit himself. Their secret was safe. With that, they went off to class.

4. "Bet you didn't see that one coming!"

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Chapter 4: Revelations

The rest of the week passed by uneventfully for Hermione. She watched most of the Gryffindor Quidditch practices, even some of the Slytherin. Most of the time, though, she wasn't welcome.

The entire school seemed buzzing with excitement. The upcoming weekend marked the first Quidditch game \_and\_ the first Hogsmeade trip. As luck would have it, the game was Slytherin vs. Gryffindor. Celeste was practically bouncing off the walls with excitement.

"I've never been to Hogsmeade. What's it like?"

"It's very educational, there's the historic headquarters for the 1612 Goblin Rebellion, and theâ€¦."

"No, no, no. What about Zonkos, and Honeydukes? I need to get some more fireworks. Maybe Ron's brothers can help me pick out a few things! Draco would deserve whatever he gets!"

"I almost feel sorry for him! No, I don't. I was wrong," Hermione exclaimed.

"Oh, shoot, I've got to get to practice. See ya' tomorrow!" Celeste yelled as she ran off.

As the week wore on, Celeste became more and more nervous about the upcoming Quidditch game. She practically shook with anxiety.

"What if I lose? Draco will never let me hear the end of it! Or what if I fall off my broom? They'd probably kick me off the team!"

"Woah, Celeste! Calm down! You'll do fine." Hermione and Celeste were on their way to lunch. Harry and Ron were walking a ways behind them. They still didn't quite trust Celeste. "Just, well, try not to hurt anyone. Gryffindor \_is\_ my team, so I'd kind of appreciate it.

"Oh, sure! I don't cheat, Hermione. Even if I am in Slytherin. Besides, \_I\_ don't hate Harry! Just Draco."

"Glad to hear it!" Harry called from behind them. Hermione giggled.

"I'm sure they'd be willing to help you think of something to do to Malfoy," Hermione said, glancing at the boys over her shoulder. "They hate him too. If they knew

how much you hate him, they might be more friendly.

By then they had reached the Great Hall.

"See ya' later," Celeste called as she headed for the Slytherin table.

Hermione sat down at her usual place and looked up at Harry and Ron. "You might try talking to her. She's actually pretty nice friendly, but you two avoid her like the bubonic plague.

Harry and Ron looked at each other sheepishly. They didn't say much for the rest of lunch.

By the time Friday came around, none of Hermione's friends could sit still, they were shaking with excitement. Celeste was still worried about screwing up. Ron was worried about missing the Quaffle, and Harry was worried about the whole team.

Harry, Ron, and Celeste had all left for their team's locker rooms before the game, so when it was time to go out to the field, Hermione was left to walk with the other Gryffindors. Seamus and Neville were arguing about which pro team was better. Lavender, Parvati, and Ariel were going over which guys were cuter, the Fred/George Weasley or Lee Jordan; and Dean was wondering why they didn't all go play soccer.

By the time they were all seated, the game was about to start. When the whistle blew, 15 brooms rose into the air. Celeste and Harry both floated above the game to stay out of the bludgers way.

Hermione was a little worried about whom to cheer for. Gryffindor was her team, but she still wanted to cheer Celeste on. She finally decided to keep quiet, but mentally cheer them both on.

Nothing much happened for about 10 minutes. Lee rooted for the Gryffindors, like usual, as did most of the audience. All of sudden, Celeste pulled into a dive towards the Gryffindor side of the field. Harry, rather startled, shot after her, thinking she'd seen the Snitch. Just when he'd caught up with her, Celeste reared her broom up and shot off in the opposite direction, down towards the other end.

The entire field was on the edge of their seats. Even Lee couldn't think of anything to say. Hermione looked down to where Celeste was headed and saw a flash of gold. "She was bluffing! She tricked Harry into going in the opposite direction. !" Hermione cried, jumping up to see better. Harry was now right behind Celeste urging his broom on. But, before he could reach her, Celeste's fingers closed on the struggling Snitch.

The Slytherin crowd erupted into cheers, while the rest of the school

was in shock, Gryffindor had never lost to Slytherin before. Hermione clapped, not caring that her friends were looking at her strangely. Harry remained floating in the air, a dazed look on his face while the Slytherin team celebrated down below. The only Slytherin still in the air was Celeste. What she did next shocked \_everyone.\_

Celeste flew over to where Harry was floating in the air. Harry looked at her, confused. She stuck out her hand to him. Harry was so surprised, he nearly fell off his broom. Slowly, he extended his and they shook hands. Celeste smiled, let go, and flew down to the ground. Harry just stared after her, shocked.

Hermione didn't know what to think as she waited outside the locker rooms after the game. Most of the two teams had already left their locker rooms, but her friends hadn't yet. The Gryffindor boys door swung open and Harry, Ron, Fred, and George came out, talking quietly.

"So, \_now\_ do you believe me? I told you she was nice," Hermione said to them.

They all nodded.

"We believe you," Ron said, "Though I still think I'm hallucinating."

"You weren't. Now wait a sec. I'm waiting for Celeste. She's not out yet."

"Sure, sure," they all said, nodding.

About a minute later, the Slytherin locker room door swung open and Celeste came out.

"Ugh, some of those people can be so annoying! A few aren't talking to me because I don't cheat." She rolled her eyes and grinned.

They set off for the school, Hermione and Celeste in the lead and the boys behind them. Hermione and Celeste chatted all the way about Hogsmeade. The guys occasionally added their own comments, but they were mostly quiet, still in awe at Celeste's unusual display of sportsmanship back on the field. They soon reached the school and to where they went their separate ways.

"See ya' tomorrow, Hermione!" Celeste called before walking away towards the Slytherin dungeons. Hermione, Harry, Ron, Fred, and George walked on.

A little while later, they were all gathered in the common room discussing their plans for the next day.

"We need to go to Zonkos, George, were out of dungbombs. Used 'em up in Charms last week," Fred was saying.

Hermione glanced up from helping Parvati with her Potions essay. "Hey, Fred. Celeste wanted to know if you'd help her pick out some things to use on Draco. She hates him more than we do!"

Fred and George exchanged looks. "I suppose we could help," George said slowly, a grin spreading across his face. "After allâ€¦"

"Who are we to turn down a Slytherin hater?" Fred finished, beaming.

They got up and walked off to their room, no doubt plotting something.

"I'm almost afraid to ask what they have planned, Ron commented, watching his two brothers walk off.

"Whatever it is, I'm sure Malfoy deserves it!" Harry said. He stood up, yawning and stretching. "I'm going to bed, I'm beat." He gathered his books up and headed off to the boys' dorms. Ron stood up too.

"I'm going too. That game was exhausting!" He walked off after Harry.

Hermione gathered her books too and stood up. "You going to bed soon, Parvati?" She looked at the other girl, who had frozen, staring at the door Ron had left through. Hermione waved a hand in front of Parvati's face. "Parvati?"

"Hmm? Oh, sorry. Isn't Ron cute?" she asked wistfully, sighing.

"Uh-huh, sure," Hermione said, biting back her laughter. "Come on, let's go to bed." She pulled Parvati up by the arm and the two got their books together and walked off.

The next morning, all the Gryffindor girls were up and ready early. They sat in the common room, waiting for everyone else to come down. The others sat putting on their make-up and chatting about fashions while Hermione read ahead in her Potions book.

"C'mon, Hermione. Lighten up!" Parvati was saying. Hermione looked up from her book. "Which color do you like better, blue or pink?" Parvati continued, holding out two jars of eyeshadow to Hermione.

Hermione looked at the other girls. "Well, I really wouldn't know," she said carefully, "but I like the blue," she finished. Parvati grinned.

"so do I. Now hold still." Lavender reached out and held down Hermione's arms.

"What are you doing?" Hermione stammered. Parvati kept grinning.

"Hold still or I'll smear this!" she said, opening the blue jar. "You said you liked the blue." She took out the brush and swept some over Hermione's eyes. "There," she finished. "It's about time you started acting like a girl. See?" She held out a mirror. Hermione had to admit, it did look good. The color made her eyes stand out more, looking hazel rather than flat brown. She looked up to see Harry and Ron coming down the stairs from their dorm, talking about Quidditch animatedly with Seamus.

"Don't you dare wash that off," Lavender warned, "Or we'll be forced

to do it all over again."

The others walked over to where the girls sat.

"Wash what off?" Ron asked. Parvati blushed a crimson color, and Hermione shot him a look that clearly stated 'Say anything and I'll make sure you never say anything again'. He raised one flaming-red eyebrow, but said nothing. Harry hid a smile behind his hand and pretended to cough.

"You can keep this Hermione, I already have this color," Parvati said, stuffing the jar into her hand. Harry and Ron burst out laughing.

"Hermione's wearing make-up? What's this world coming too?" Ron asked between laughs. Harry's green eyes sparkled with amusement. Hermione blushed and pretended to tie her shoe.

"Actually," Harry said once he was done laughing, "I think it looks nice. You look good in blue"

"Thanks," Hermione said quietly, her cheeks burning. He probably only meant it in a friendly way, but still—

"Okay, okay. Enough of that. Come on or we'll miss the train!" Seamus said impatiently. He looked a little nervous about something, but Hermione didn't know what. Their large group started down the corridors to the Entrance hall where they met up with the rest of the school. Hermione soon heard her voice being called out over the din of hundreds of voices.

"Hermione! Over here!" It was Celeste, waving her hands over her head. Hermione laughed outright at this, she looked like an eager little kid!

"Come over here!" Hermione called, gesturing in case she didn't hear her. Once they were outside, Celeste made her way over. Hermione rushed over to the carriage Harry and Ron were saving and pulled Celeste in after her. After a few minutes of silence, Celeste decided to say something.

"Can you two even talk?" she asked Harry and Ron. "I mean, you never say anything when I'm around. I may be a Slytherin, but I'm not poisoned or anything. I don't bite."

"What do you want us to say?" Harry asked.

"Anything, just as long as you don't sit there like cucumbers, or something." Celeste replied.

"What was Dovehart like?" Hermione asked, changing the subject. Celeste launched into a detailed description of her old school, and before they knew it, the trip was over.

Once they reached Hogsmeade, Celeste hopped out of the carriage, pulling Hermione after her. She stopped short once outside to gaze about in wonder at the town before them. Hermione had to admit, it still amazed her. After a moment, the two girls set off towards the main street.

"Hey, Hermione!" she heard Harry call. "Ron and I are going to the Quidditch store! How about meeting us at The Three Broomsticks at 2:00?"

"Sure!" she called back, "see you then!" She took off after Celeste who was waiting impatiently for her to catch up. Once she did, they set off for Zonkos.

They waked in the crowded store and started to look for Fred and George. They found them, and Lee, by a display of itching powder. It wasn't really hard to find them, their flaming-red hair was a dead give-away. Celeste walked boldly up to the trio.

"You're Fred, right?" she asked one of the twins.

"Umm, yeah," Fred said, looking startled. "You're that Slytherin seeker, right?"

"That's me! Calm down, I don't bite. I just to find something to use to get back at Draco with, and Hermione here told me you could help."

The three guys brightened up at this, grinning wickedly. "I think I know just the thing," Lee said, motioning everyone over to a display table. "These are new, would they work?" He motioned at the table, shaking his dreadlocks out of his face.

"Perfect," Celeste breathed, grinning evilly.

After Zonkos, Hermione and Celeste went to Honeydukes to get candy for their moms. Hermione knew her mother loved the fudge, even if she was a dentist.

"Oh, crap, look at the time!" Celeste cried. "It's almost 2. We've got to get to the Three Broomsticks." Hermione looked at her watch, which she'd gotten for her 14th birthday. They set off for the Three Broomsticks at a brisk pace. It had gotten colder then when they'd started out and their breath created little clouds of fog in front of them. It was s relief to walk in the restaurant, which was by that time full of Hogwarts students and chatter. After a quick glance around Hermione spotted Harry and Ron in a booth off to the left. Grabbing Celeste's arm, she pulled her over to the table and slid in across from Harry, Celeste across from Ron. Harry grinned at her wearied look. He pushed two mugs across the table, one at her and one at Celeste.

"We went ahead and ordered for you. Hope you don't mind," he said. They thanked him gratefully. Hermione took slow, small gulps of the hot liquid. Celeste, ignoring the scalding temperature, took a large mouthful and gave a blissful little sigh.

"God, that stuffs good. What is it?" she asked. Ron stared at her, shocked.

"You've never had Butterbeer?" he gasped. "I thought you lived in England?!"

"I do, but I've never been to Hogsmeade before," she answered.



Hermione looked around the room at all of her friends sitting at other tables. Fred and George were talking to Alicia Spinnet and Katie Bell. Dean Thomas was sitting with  
> Lavender Brown, both of whom looked very happy, and

"Hey, Ron. Isn't that Ginny?" Hermione asked, pointing to a booth in the corner. Sitting across from Seamus was a girl with very red hair. Only the Weasleys had red hair.

"\_Seamus?\_" Ron whispered, threateningly. "That little he's too old for her!" He started to get up, but Harry grabbed his arm and pulled him back down.

"Ron, he's our age, that's not too old. She's 13, she can take care of herself," Hermione said sensibly. Ron sat down, still fuming and muttering to himself. Hermione, Harry, and Celeste got into a discussion about Quidditch, Hermione stating facts and Harry and Celeste going over plays.

"Well, well, well," came a lazy voice from behind Hermione. Harry's eyes narrowed, and Hermione didn't have to ask who it was. Turning around, she saw none other than Draco Malfoy and his brainless sidekicks. "Are these your new friends, Drexel?" he said, sneering. "I would have thought you'd have better judgment. It's a shame, really. I wonder what Father would say?" He smirked.

Celeste stood to face him. "I don't give a damn what your precious daddy thinks, Malfoy. At least my friends can talk in complete sentences. Unlike some people," she said, smiling sweetly.

"She'd got ya' there, Malfoy," Harry said gleefully. Draco narrowed his eyes.

"You don't know what you're talking about," he said.

"Yes, I do," she replied. "Those two don't have half a clue between them."

"What do you know. You hang out with Mudbloods." Hermione stood up, clenching her fists to her sides. "Don't bother, Mudblood. We were just off." He turned to leave. After a split-second hesitation, Hermione stuck her foot out in front of him, sending him sprawling on the ground.

"Oh, Draco, let me help you!" Celeste said. She grabbed a mug and dumped its contents on his silvery-blond head. Ron and Harry burst out laughing. By this time, a few surrounding tables had seen, and were also laughing. Draco stood up, his hair wet and his face a beet-red, a sharp contrast to his usually pale features. He narrowed his eyes at her.

"I'll get you, Drexel. I know what you're hiding." He smiled in his evil way.

"No, I don't think you'll tell. I know your secret too." They stood face to face, each daring the other to tell. Draco turned and stalked off, hair still dripping. Hermione, Harry, and Ron stared at Celeste in bewilderment. What was going on? What was she hiding?

For the remainder of the week, Draco avoided direct confrontation

with Celeste. Instead, he kept to small bits of nastiness, like knocking her books out of her hands in the hallways. Potions class became even more of a hellhole than usual.

On one such day, Hermione, Harry, Ron, and Celeste were exiting Potions class on their way to lunch, Draco walking a few feet in front of them. Celeste quickened her pace, elbowing him in the back, causing him to drop all of his books. Snape heard the commotion and came out of the classroom.

"What happened here?" he asked in his oily voice.

"She knocked my books out of my hands, professor," Draco said, pointing at Celeste, who had a completely innocent look on her face.

"It isn't my fault he's a klutz, professor," she said. "He tripped over his own two feet and tried to blame me!" She smiled sweetly.

Snape calculated the two Slytherins. "Fine. Just try to be more careful, Mr. Malfoy." With that, he walked back into the classroom, shaking his head and muttering.

"Yes, do be more careful," Celeste said, turning to face the Gryffindor trio. "Come on, lets go. Any longer here and I may lose my appetite."

Without a second glance at Draco and his two goons, the four walked off to the Great Hall.

Later that night, in the library, the two girls were finishing up their Astronomy charts with Harry and Ron when the aforementioned Slytherin entered. Hermione was surprised to see that he was alone. With only a venomous glare in her direction, Draco took a seat as far away from the quartet as possible.

Hermione looked back down at her work. Ron dropped his quill, stretching out his long frame and yawning. Harry laughed.

"I take it that means we should pack it up for the night?" Harry inquired, grinning.

"Sounds good to me," Hermione replied. "I'm beat." The three Gryffindors started to pack up their books. "Are you leaving, Celeste?" Hermione asked. Celeste shook her head.

"Nah, I want to get a book on constellations for background study. Go on, I'll see ya tomorrow. "

"If you're sure," Hermione said, with a glance over to Draco's table in the back. "Have fun."

> "Oh, believe me, I will." Celeste said grinning. Hermione left with Harry and Ron for their dorms. <p>

Halfway there, Hermione realized 5that she had mistakenly pick up Celeste's Astronomy book instead of her own.



A/N: I did it!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I got out part four! ::dances around the room:: Sorry for the delay, but I had severe writers block. I hope to get the next part out much sooner. Please don't kill me! Once again, please, please, please review! Bet ya didn't see that ending coming! If you did guess, great job! Well, bye for now!

Disclaimer and Claimer: Celeste Drexel is mine, all mine!!!! You can't have her!!! (ignore me) Also, as much as I hate to say it, I don't own Harry Potter and Co. They belong to J. K. (bless her) But I'll buy them if she's selling! I don't claim to be J.K., just a humble fan. ::bows down to her Harry Potter shrine:: Well, buh-bye!!!

## 5. One Big Dysfunctional Family

> <meta name="Generator"> The Secret: Part 5

The Secret: Part 5

Sierra

### Chapter 5: Family Problems

Hermione stalked down the corridors, anger and betrayal radiating off of her in waves. She was seething, yet extremely hurt. \_How could she not have told me??? I thought we were friends! How could she do this to me?\_ She grimaced as she recalled the overheard conversation. Her rational conscience got the better of her. \_If she told you she had a twin, would you have listened?\_ she thought. \_You'd have been just as mad.\_ She switched back to her earlier style of thinking. \_Of course I would have!!! She's a \_Malfoy \_for Christ's sake!! And she lied to me!!\_

By that time she had reached the portrait hole. She paused outside. What would she say to Harry and Ron? They would definitely notice that something was wrong, they always did. She finally resolved not to tell them anything. She didn't want anyone else around school to find out. She wanted to see if Celeste would tell people on her own, or act as if nothing was wrong. And she didn't feel like explaining the matter to anyone at the moment. Taking a deep breath, she mumbled the password and stepped into the common room. Once inside, she proceeded straight to the 4th year girls' dorm without stopping. Harry and Ron looked up as she walked in.

"Hey, Hermione, did you get your book?" Ron asked. She stopped briefly.

"Yes, I did," she said shortly, impatient to get out of there.

"Is something wrong?" Harry asked, looking worried. "You look angry."

"I'm fine, I'm just tired. I'm going to take a shower and go to bed." She offered a small smile, hoping that they bought her excuse. Harry looked suspicious, but just nodded.

"Okay, see you tomorrow," he said. He and Ron went back to talking, and Hermione left.

Later on, alone in her dorm, Hermione was playing back the conversation in her head. \_So she has a twin. Not only that, she's \_Draco's \_twin! I almost feel sorry for her. \_Of course, no amount of sorrow could make her any less angry with Celeste. \_I can't believe she didn't tell me! She said her parents were divorced and her dad was in another country! \_Hermione heard the door open and Lavender come in with Parvati.

"Hey, Hermione, you in here?" she asked. Hermione poked her head through the curtains surrounding her bed. "What?" she asked.

"Harry seemed \_pretty \_worried about you," she said sweetly, smiling. "I overheard him telling Ron that he was really worried about you, that maybe something was wrong." She and Parvati both grinned. "I think he's sweet on you!" Hermione smiled in spite of herself.

"Really?" she asked. She always had had a little crush on Harry, and it seemed to have gotten bigger over the past few months. She blushed at how her voice squeaked. Lavender and Parvati just smiled and walked away to the connecting bathroom and Hermione ducked back behind her bed curtains. Her anger had ebbed away slightly and she crawled under the covers and went to sleep.

The next morning she was in a slightly better mood, although she was still just as mad at Celeste as she had been the night before. She resolved just to simply avoid her at all costs, which would be easy, all except for Potions. She decided to simply not speak to her unless Celeste spoke first. She met up with Harry and Ron in the common room and the started down to breakfast.

"Are you feeling better?" Harry asked. "You seemed a little upset last night." He looked at her, worried. Hermione blushed.

"Yeah, I just had a headache. It's gone now." She bent down to tie her shoe so he wouldn't see how red her cheeks had gotten. Once she stood back up, they proceeded to the Great Hall. She was grateful that they didn't come across Celeste in the hallways. If they had seen how she was avoiding her, they would have definitely have noticed that something was wrong. They entered the room and sat down at their accustomed places. Hermione immediately buried her nose in a book to avoid seeing either of the Malfoys. She was determined to have an anger free meal. Harry and Ron were quizzing each other on poisons for Potions.

"Hey, Hermione, what are the 10 uses for griffins blood?" Ron asked.

" We have a test? I completely forgot!" she looked up, surprised. Inside, she was grinning. If they had a test, she wouldn't have to work with Celeste, only sit next to her. Ron and Harry looked at her, shocked.

"Hermione forgot that we had a test?" Ron asked, gaping. "Something is definitely wrong!" Harry nodded in agreement.

"Nothing's wrong, I just had a headache and it slipped my mind, that's all." She stared back at them, trying her best to look sincere. It seemed to work, to an extent. Harry watched her throughout the meal, as if she had grown horns.

After breakfast, the morning classes passed by fairly quickly, much to Hermione's chagrin. Soon, it was time for the dreaded Potions class. \_At least I won't have to talk to anyone today\_ Hermione thought as she made her way down to the dungeons. She hadn't seen much of either Malfoys during breakfast, luckily, and she hoped not to. Finally, they were there. Walking into the classroom, they took their seats. Instead of sitting in the middle, where she and Celeste usually sat, she took a seat near Harry and Ron.

"Aren't you going to sit with Celeste?" Ron asked, looking confused.

"What, you don't want me to sit with you?" Hermione asked, looking hurt. "Fine, I won't then." She stood up, as if to make her way over to her other seat. Harry grabbed her arm and pulled her down.

"No, we want you to sit here. Ron was just asking." She shrugged and sat back down. By that time, the classroom was filling up. Hermione looked up just as Celeste walked in with another Slytherin. Celeste gave her a worried look, as if she were wondering if Hermione would tell anyone what she had overheard. Hermione looked away, shaking her head. She wouldn't tell. Snape walked in and immediately passed out their tests and the class began.

The next day in Potions, they were back to working with partners. Hermione and Celeste worked quietly for the first 10 minutes before Celeste decided to break the ice.

"Are you ever going to talk to me?" she asked in a whisper, looking Hermione in the face. Hermione looked at her, and then back at their potion.

"You lied. Why didn't you tell me? I thought we were friends, but I was wrong." She whispered back. She didn't see the hurt expression on Celeste's face. Neither of them said anything else for the rest of the class.

One good thing came out of their fight. The three Gryffindors noticed that Draco had been avoiding them for the entire week. Even when he had had the chance to say something rude to any of them, he simply hurried away. Ron was happy about this, as was Harry. Still, Harry noticed that something was strange about his new attitude.

"It's like he's scared of us, or something. Like someone had some dirt on him." He turned to Hermione, questioningly. "This wouldn't have anything to do with the way you and Celeste have been avoiding each other, would it?"

"Of course not. We just had a disagreement. That's all." She looked at him, hoping he believed her. As much as she despised Draco and was angry at Celeste, she wasn't ready to give them away just yet. Harry accepted her excuse and went back to studying.

Christmas vacation passed and Hermione and Celeste continued to avoid each other. It was now mid-March. Quidditch matches came and went, Hermione cheering for Gryffindor. It seemed Gryffindor and Slytherin were neck in neck for the cup. Harry and Ron spent more and more time at practice, and Hermione took to watching them, having nothing better to do.

Sunday morning dawned, cold and dismal. The halls were damp, and the ceiling in the Great Hall showed the storm raging outside. Breakfast began like any other day. There was the usual amount of chatter and sound as any normal day.

All of a sudden there was a loud clatter, like plates hitting the floor. The sound died away, and the student body turned to the source of the noise, the Slytherin table. Hermione looked up to see Celeste gripping a letter, her usually pale features completely white. She stood up slowly, shaking. Hermione turned her head to where Draco was seated, hoping that his expression may give away that anything was wrong. What she saw chilled her to the bone. He was holding a similar letter in his hand. His smile wasn't like his usual sneer. It was \_evil, \_a malicious grin that was directed at his sister. Hermione shivered and looked back to Celeste. She had started to the doorway, slowly and shaking at each step. Dumbledore looked worried also, it seemed he also had no idea what was wrong. Halfway across the hall, Celeste stopped. She looked straight at Hermione and burst into sobs, racing from the Great Hall. All the anger ebbed away from Hermione, all the feelings of the past few weeks. She jumped up from the table and sprinted after Celeste, leaving the Hall in shocked silence.

Hermione raced after Celeste, following the pounding footsteps and racking sobs. It seemed that Celeste was not headed for the Slytherin dorm, but Moaning Myrtle's bathroom. She flung the door open and ran inside. Myrtle was perched at the top of the stall door, her chin in her hands.

"That girl cries more than \_I \_do," she said in awe. Hermione glared at her and dashed down to the last stall where she could hear Celeste sobbing. Opening the door, she saw her huddled in the corner, crying into her robes. Hermione kneeled down next to her, and patted her on the back. She was no longer angry at her, only worried about what may be the matter.

After about 20 minutes, Celeste had calmed down enough to talk. She was still crying, but silently. Hermione decided it was a good time to ask what had happened. She sat down.

"Celeste?" she asked quietly. The other girl looked up through her tangle of damp hair. She launched herself at Hermione, wrapping her arms around her and sobbing into her robes.

"\_She's dead, she's dead!\_" she wailed, over and over again. Confused, Hermione lifted Celeste's arms up and faced her.

"Who's dead, Celeste?" she asked, worriedly.

"My mum!" she wailed, burying her face in her hands. "I just got the letter, she had a heart-attack last night!" She hugged her knees and began to rock back and forth. "She's dead and Draco doesn't even care! He's glad!!" She sobbed and sobbed, and Hermione just sat there, letting her cry until she fell asleep.

A few minutes later, Professor McGonagall walked through the door to the bathroom, no doubt in search of Celeste. She opened the stall door where Hermione was sitting with Celeste, to see that the girl was asleep.

"Is she okay?" the women asked Hermione, concern crossing her face. Hermione felt herself growing angry.

"Oh she's fine," she said sarcastically. "Her mum just died, and her own family couldn't care less! She's just peachy right now. If you don't mind, she needs someone right now, and I'm going to stay with her." Hermione was surprised at herself. She wasn't normally rude to her teachers. Luckily, McGonagall wasn't angry.

"Fine, I'll tell your teachers where you are. Tell me when she's awake." With that, she swept out of the room.

About an hour later, Celeste stirred. She wiped her face on her sleeve and looked up at Hermione. Hermione looked at her, concerned.

"Are you going to be okay?" she asked.

"Yeah, soon," Celeste whispered. "I can't believe she's gone. She was the only one who cared about me. Father and Draco wish was dead too. Father never wanted a girl. Mum was the only one who kept him from giving me to an orphanage. And nowâ€¦ she's dead." Celeste's voice cracked, but she had run out of tears. She just rocked back and forth, hugging her legs. "I can't believe I cried in front of them," she said, squeezing her eyes tight.

"It's okay to cry. Everyone understands," Hermione said, trying to console her. "Everyone cries sometimes."

"Not me. I've never cried in front of anyone but mother. Not father, or Draco. Especially not Draco. I'm a Malfoy, Hermione. We don't cry in front of others. I can't believe I let him see me break down. He'll never let me live it down."

"It's okay. Just because he's heartless doesn't mean you have to be. It's okay to cry."

"I hate them. Both of them. The only one I loved was mother, and now she's gone. It wasn't an accident, Hermione. She died because she knew father was helping Voldemort. She would have stopped him. And now she's dead and I have to live withâ€¦ them. They're exactly alike. Cold and cruel. Draco wasn't always mean. Father brainwashed him, made him a little copy of himself. Mother kept him from doing the same to me. But now she's gone, and I have to live with them." She shuddered.

"You can visit me anytime, Celeste. If it gets to be too much, you can come over my house for the summer. My parents would love to meet you." Hermione said, hoping that Celeste would. She was no longer angry at Celeste. If she had been in her position, she would have kept it a secret too. "I'm sure it's almost lunch, are you hungry?"

"I can't go in there looking like this." Celeste said, gesturing at her wrinkled, tear-soaked robes. "would you come with me to my dorm while I change and get fixed up? I don't want to go alone, I may run into him."

"Sure, but I hope we don't run into anyone in there. I'm not supposed



to go down to the Slytherin rooms." Hermione commented, glad Celeste was over her crying bout.

They stood up, dusting themselves off, and set out. Classes weren't over yet, so the halls were empty. They made their way to Celeste's dorm quickly none the less. After Celeste had changed, washed her face, and brushed her hair they went up to Hermione's dorms to get her books. By the time they were ready, it was time for lunch to start.

"By the way, Hermione?" Celeste said. She was a little better, and certainly looked better.

"Yeah?" Hermione asked, turning to her.

"Thanks, none of the other girls would have come after me," Celeste said.

"No problem," Hermione said, smiling.

By the time they got down to the Great Hall for lunch, the Hall was full, the walls echoing with their usual chatter. But, when Hermione and Celeste walked in and headed to their respective tables, all talk died down until it was so quiet you could hear a feather drop. Hermione sat down at her usual seat, ignoring the stares directed at her for running out on breakfast. Celeste walked over to her table, but stayed standing. The student body just stared at her as if she were a time bomb ready to explode.

"What!?!? What in the hell are you looking at? Do you think something's interesting? That's right, turn around. Nothing to see here!" She sat down, glaring at everyone who was still looking at her. Celeste could be very intimidating at times. Finally, everyone went back to their conversations, a bit subdued, but at least they weren't looking at her. The only one still looking in her direction was Draco, with a sardonic smirk on his pale face. Celeste gave him glare for glare, each with identical hatred on their identical faces, neither willing to break their staring contest. They only looked away as everyone got up to go to classes at the end of lunch.

"I really hate him." Celeste muttered as she caught up to Hermione. "I mean hate. I have to live with that!" she choked out. Hermione was afraid she was going to cry again, but she drew a quivering breath and regained her composure. "Don't worry, I can't cry anymore. I'm all dried up." She gave Hermione a sad smile. "Well, I'll see you later. Wanna meet in the library?"

"Yeah, sure. See ya there," Hermione said, waving as Celeste followed the other Slytherins to their next class. She hurried up to Harry and Ron on their way to Herbology.

"What's up with her?" Ron asked. He actually looked worried.

"Her mum just died. She found out this morning. She'll be okay soon, she just needs some time," Hermione said quietly. Harry looked down at his shoes. Out of the three of them, she was the only one who would understand how Celeste could feel. The trio quietly made their way to the greenhouse.

After dinner, Hermione walked into the library to see Celeste

silently crying in the corner. She rushed over to her.

"What happened?? Are you okay?" She sat down next to her at their usual table.

"I'm fine, but I can't believe how much of an \*\*\*hole he can be! Do you know what he said to me???"

"Who, Draco? What did he say?"

He saidâ€|he was glad she's dead!" Celeste stammered with tears running down her face. "I can't believe how apathetic he is! It's inhuman!! I can't take it. I have to get back at him."

"Well, what about that stuff you bought at Zonko's? That is what you bought it for."

"You're right, I almost forgot! Potions would be the perfect time. How about tomorrow?"

"Sure, bring it to class and we can do it then. Now, do you want to study?"

"Sure, lets get started. We have test tomorrow in History, and I hear it's hardâ€|."

The next day at Potions, Hermione and Celeste waited nervously for the right time to strike. When Snape wasn't paying attention, Celeste slipped three purple balls, the size of jellybeans out of their packet. Walking across the room to the supply cabinet, she accidentally bumped into Draco's table, dropping them into his jar of snake's eyes.

"Watch it, Drexel," he said glaring at her. Without looking away, he picked up the jar and dumped its contents into his cauldron. Celeste smiled sweetly and hurried back over to their table.

"5â€|4â€|3â€|2â€| "

"BOOM!"

Looking over, they saw a ratherâ€|..purpleâ€|. Draco standing as still as a statue. Hisâ€|discoloredâ€|bangs dripped with a thick purple ink. The entire side Slytherin side of the room had been sprayed with it.

"Jeez, those st-ink pellets do work!" Hermione whispered When mixed with a base substance, the pellets exploded, spraying the unfortunate brewer with a rather, unpleasant, smelly ink. Draco's normally pale features, as well as half of the class, were now a grape color, a rather funny site to most of the Gryffindors, who were rolling on the ground laughing.

"Permanent on clothes too!" Celeste whispered back. "Draco's precious daddy going to have a fit!" She smiled sardonically, looking like a true Malfoy. Draco was attempting to shake off the ink, but was unsuccessful. Snape stalked over to the table.

"What happened here??" he demanded, observing the soaked

Slytherins.

"Iâ€¦don't know! It just exploded!" Draco stammered.

"Please, professor. I think I know what happened. You said yourself that too much mushroom dust would cause this explosion. It seems Draco was careless and wasn't paying attention to his measurements." She smiled sweetly at Snape.

"Hmm, it appears so. Mr. Malfoy, you can clean this up this evening, after dinner. Class dismissed." He turned around, muttering something about incompetent students. Draco just stood completely still.

"Yes Draco. Be sure not to miss any spots!" Celeste said, passing him on her way out the door. He glared at her with such hatred; it was a wonder she didn't melt on the floor in an acidic puddle. Celeste glared right back at him until she was out of the classroom.

The next day, Hermione noticed that Draco used every chance to glare at them, not just with his usual hatred. Hermione was almost scared of him, rather than just hating him. Nothing happened until dinner.

The seven students, Harry, Ron, Hermione, Celeste, Fred, George, and Lee walked into the Great Hall, discussing the girl's recent prank in Potions. Celeste broke off from the group to go over to her own table. Before she could reach her seat, she was stopped by , you guessed it, Draco Malfoy. Whichever way she stepped, he did too, blocking her path.

"I don't like people making a fool of me, Drexel."

"Well, that's too bad. But you are one, so it's only fitting." She again attempted to pass him, but was blocked once again.

"I hear your poor mummy died. That's too bad," he said with a satisfied smirk.

"Watch it Draco," she said narrowing her eyes at him. She was madder than Hermione had ever seen her. "Say anything and I'llâ€¦".

"You'll what? You couldn't do anything. I know why she died." By now all the Gryffindors and Slytherins were watching them, apprehension across their faces. They were completely oblivious to their audience.

"She probably committed suicide. I would, if I had a kid like you." Hermione gasped, and she wasn't the only one. So did the rest of the students within earshot of the two. Celeste's eyes bulged. She let out a shriek at lunged at him, tackling him to the floor. She proceeded to hit the living daylights out of him, and getting hit in return as he struggled to get her off of him.

"Don't you ever, EVER talk about my mother like that, you cold, heartless piece of \*\*\*\*! Don't you ever talk about her!!"

By that time they were rolling the ground, wands forgotten, yanking at each other's hair. The rest of the school had crowded around, save the gutless Hufflepuffs, watching in shocked awe. Fred and George rushed forward to pull Celeste off of him, and Lee dragged Draco away

from kicking her. They held her back, kicking and screaming as Draco lay gasping on the ground, blood streaming from his nose. By that time, Dumbledore had made his way through the crowd by setting off multi-colored sparks. Professor McGonagall rushed forward to restrain Celeste while Snape helped Draco up off the ground.

"Let me go! Let me go!" she yelled, struggling. McGonagall put a leg-binding spell on her so that she stopped kicking.

"We're going to need to have a conference with your parents, Mr. Malfoy and Miss. Drexel. It seems we have a problem here." Professor Dumbledore led them off to his office. "Miss. Granger, would you come also? It seems you may have a part in this." Shaking, Hermione followed him, McGonagall, who was still restraining a now un-bound Celeste, and Snape, who was holding back Draco. It shocked Hermione still to see such identical expressions on both their faces. It made them look all the more identical.

"Professor Flitwick, I'm leaving you in charge. See to it that everyone gets to class on time." He turned and led them down the twisting halls to his office.

They had reached the statue guarding Dumbledore's office, and after a muttered password "Lemon Drop", continued down to his office.

"Sit down, you three," Dumbledore said, gesturing to three chairs that had been moved to one side of the room. Celeste and Hermione took two, as far away from Draco as possible, which suited him just fine. Celeste had calmed down a great deal, and now had a trapped look on her face, like a bug caught in a jar. Draco also had an apprehensive look on his face, which Hermione suspected was due to the thought of his father being dragged out of work to come down for a conference. Lucius Malfoy would not be pleased.

Professor Dumbledore took out a piece of parchment and a quill and began a letter to send requesting an audience with their father.

"What was your mother's name, Mr. Malfoy?" he asked looking up from addressing his letter to Draco's parents.

"She's dead," He said with a wicked smile. Celeste narrowed her eyes and gave him a swift but strong kick in the shins, causing him to double over. McGonagall, with a quick flick of her wand, bound her legs together.

"And your parents, Miss. Drexel?" McGonagall inquired, apparently at her wits' end with both of them. Celeste straightened, shocked. Hermione was too.

"Y-you don't know?" she asked, stuttering. She looked at Snape, who was as ignorant to the answer as McGonagall.

"I felt it better not to enlighten the staff as to your position, Mrs. Drexel. But under the circumstances, it is necessary." He turned to the two confused professors with an amused gleam in his eyes. "Draco and Celeste are, in fact, twins." He said. McGonagall dropped down into a chair and Snape gaped at him. He and Lucius had been friends when they were in school, and he must have assumed that Lucius would have told him that Draco had had a twin. Celeste buried her face in

her hands. Dumbledore went back to his letter and, upon finishing, addressed it to the ministry and sent it off.

"I have notified your father, and asked him to come here for a discussion. He should be here shortly. I asked you to be present, Miss. Granger, because you were the only one who heard the exact words exchanged, and I'm sure know of the whole situation." Hermione nodded fearfully. She was not looking forward to seeing an enraged Lucius Malfoy. Seeing Celeste mad had been bad enough. Hermione could tell from their tense positions, that Celeste and Draco were not delighted at the prospect either.

Approximately ten minutes had passed when they heard a loud knocking on the door below. A still shaken Snape stood up to go and open the door, and he was followed back into the room by a very irate Lucius Malfoy. Hermione doubled over at the striking family resemblance between the three Malfoys. All though one wore a fierce expression, the other two, one of fear, it was definite that the three were related.

Lucius Malfoy's eyes swept the room, from his two children cowering in their seats, to Hermione herself stiff with anxiety, to Professor Dumbledore sitting calmly in his seat.

"Please have a seat, Mr. Malfoy," he said gesturing to on to the left of McGonagall. He sat down, looking very annoyed at not knowing what was going on.

"What's going on, Dumbledore? It had better be important, I don't like being called out of work." He glared at Dumbledore, who simply leaned back in his seat.

"It seems that we have a bit of a problem between Celeste and Draco. Their teachers have been noticing extreme animosity between them over the last few days, resulting in a very violent argument this evening," he said indicating the twins many bruises and Draco's bloody nose. "Miss. Granger, would you be so kind as to tell me what was said that caused Celeste to react so violently this evening?" Six pairs of eyes turned to her and she gulped.

"Draco said that he was glad her mum had died. That she probably committed suicide because she had Celeste for a daughter. Celeste was just upset. He'd been tormenting her over the last few days about it, and she couldn't take it any more, I guess. You can ask anyone else for proof, if you want. Harry and Ron heard most of it." Hermione looked over at Celeste, who was looking on defiantly, with tears streaming down her face. "I can't blame her, I would have done the same thing."

"Thank you Hermione. You can go back to your common room now. That's all we needed to hear." Dumbledore said with a kind smile. Hermione nodded.

"Thanks professor," she said, getting up. She quickly left and hurried to the Gryffindor common room. She felt sorry to leave Celeste back there alone, but she wanted to get as far away from Lucius Malfoy as possible.

When she had gotten to the common room, she spotted Harry and Ron playing chess in a corner, with Lee and the Weasley twins plotting

pranks at the table next to them. She slowly made her way over to them, hoping they didn't ask too many questions.

"How'd the 'conference' go?" Harry asked, breaking her silence.

"It isn't over, but Dumbledore only needed me to describe what was said, done, etc. I guess they thought I was a reliable source," she said with a sigh. She felt bad about leaving Celeste there, but was glad to be away. She plopped down in an a chair and closed her eyes.

"Did they really call in their parents?" Fred wondered. "They've never even called in ours, for all that we've done, so this must be serious." He looked slightly worried. He'd obviously heard a lot about the Malfoy's from his father.

"Yup, and I never want to see an enraged Lucius Malfoy again. Once is one too many times." She opened her eyes to look at the other people around her. She was inwardly hoping that no one would askâ€|.

"What about Celeste's parents? What were they like?" George asked eagerly. He asked. Darn.

"Umâ€|â€|.you know her mom diedâ€|â€|.her dad isâ€|" she stammered, hoping she wouldn't reveal Celeste's, little secret.

"He'sâ€|what?" he asked again.

—

\_I might as well say it. They'd find out sooner or later. \_"Okay, this'll be a shock. Have you ever gotten a good look at her? Does she look familiar?" She hoped that they'd figure it out on their own. "In any way?"

"Not really. Are you trying purposely to avoid saying, or what?"

"Okay, okay, I'll tell you. Celeste has a twin. Here. One you all know and hate." She leaned back and sighed, the weight off of her shoulders.

"You aren't sayingâ€|.." Harry started, his eyes widening.

"Yes, but don't get mad at her. It can't be easy." She said urgently.

"You tell us that she's aâ€|..\_Malfoy\_, and then tell us not to get mad?? Are you nuts???" Ron said, jumping up and upsetting the chessboard, sending the men running.

"That's exactly what I'm saying. If you were in her position, would you go about flaunting it? I can't blame her." She said defensively. The group sat in shocked silence.

"I guess you're right," Lee said slowly. "I certainly wouldn't tell anyone if I were part of that family. Especially a twin! That's even worse! Is she okay? She looked a little beat up." The others, except Ron, nodded.

"Draco looks worse," Hermione said smiling. "Her mother's name was Drexel, so to avoid prejudice, I guess, she went by that name. And as we speak, she's in Dumbledore's office with the rest of her dysfunctional family having a parent-teacher conference. Even Snape didn't know, so her father must have covered it up well. That's why she went to Dovehart. And lighten up Ron. You know she's not that bad, and she can't help her family." She gave Ron a strong glare. "You would have done the same thing in her place, so get over it. I'm surprised that I didn't find out earlier than I did. McGonagall didn't even know!"

"Hmph. And I thought that she was smart," Fred said.

"You did? Now I'm shocked," Ron said, staring at his brother like he'd just sprouted wings. "I guess that she's still okay, but I don't really trust her." He said, frowning.

"That's okay, just don't say anything you'll regret. You tend to when you're angry." Ron sat back and snorted.

"So do you," he said. Hermione grinned, remembering her encounters with Celeste after finding out.

The next morning at breakfast, Hermione met up with a tired looking Celeste.

"How'd it go?" she asked worriedly. Celeste sighed.

"Lovely. They finally settled on two months detention each. I've got it with Snape, and Draco with McGonagall. That way neither gets favored. I start Sunday." She shrugged. "It could be worse. I could have been expelled." She gave a feeble smile.

"I had to tell your, er, secret, to the others. They were asking." Seeing Celeste's shocked look she hurried on. "Don't worry, they're not mad. Ron's a little miffed that you never told, but he'll get over it sooner or later."

"Good, at least that's off my chest," she said with a feeble smile.

"Can you still go to Hogsmeade tomorrow?" Hermione said hopefully, looking down.

"Yes, amazingly, I can. Odd, really. Why, are you hiding something?" she said, smiling.

"Well, Harry asked me to get a butterbeer with him, and I said yes. I was hoping you'd be there also," Hermione said, looking up. "Also... I happen to know that someone else was hoping that you'd be there." Hermione said coyly.

"Who?? Tell me!" Celeste said grinning. Hermione just smiled and went off to sit down and eat.

"She's still going," she announced to the six boys waiting at the table.

The next day started out like a normal trip. They boarded the carriages to Hogsmeade in high spirits and joked the whole way there.

Hermione was in a very good mood, as was Celeste, who kept sending glances at Hermione. They got there fairly quickly and hurried off to Honeydukes to stick up on candy. Afterwards, the four met the Weasley twins, accompanied by Angelina Johnson and Alicia Spinnet, and Lee at Zonkos. The four were ogling over a new brand of fireworks.

"Hey guys," Ron announced to the four at the display table. "found anything interesting?" he said, looking over Fred's shoulder.

"Just these," Fred said non-chalantly. "Just the usual."

"Hey, Celeste," Lee said. "They've got the new st-ink pellets. They squirt rotten-egg liquid all over whoever you want them to." He reached into his bag and pulled out a bag of green pellets, like the ones the girls had used in class. "You can have some, if you want. I bought more," he said, handing her the bag. Celeste smiled gleefully.

"Thanks! I know just what to do with them over the summer. She gave Lee a radiant smile.

"We're going to go to the Three Broomsticks," Harry said, holding Hermione's hand. "Anyone want to come?" he asked.

"I will," Celeste said, the other six people agreeing. The whole group tramped through the crowd to the restaurant and grabbed two adjoining tables at one end. After ordering, they planned out any pranks that they could use. It could be very useful that Celeste knew the Slytherin password. That could be very interesting. Just when Hermione thought things couldn't get better, Draco showed up.

"So, you still haven't learned, have you," he drawled. Celeste glared.

"Go crawl back in your hole, Draco. Or do you want another black eye? I can arrange that," she said coolly. "No go away before I get mad again, because you know what'll happen." She stared him down until he turned away, frustrated, and stalked off.

"He really irks me," she stated. "If it weren't illegal, I'd kill him without hesitating. How do you two do it?" she said, staring at Fred and George. The shrugged.

"We just get along. I guess it.." Fred started,

"It comes naturally. But I don't think anyone could really get along with that," George finished. They grinned at each other like two chessy cats.

"Got that right. I hate him," she said. No one argued her on that point.

The rest of the year went by quickly for the group. Hermione passed with flying colors, as did Celeste. Gryffindor won the Quidditch and House Cup as usual, and the end of the year feast passed uneventfully. Pretty soon, they were all packed up and on the train to Kings Cross Station on the way home. All seven of them, and Angelina and Alicia, grabbed a compartment and went over summer plans.



"I think I actually may have a worse summer than Harry," Celeste groaned, leaning back. "One of me, and two of them. Yay." She closed her eyes and grimaced.

"If you ever need to get away, you can send me an owl and stay at my house," Hermione offered. Celeste smiled.

"I think I may, I'll probably go crazy halfway through the summer." She said ruefully.

"Harry'll probably come over our house, so stop by," Ron added. He seemed to have forgiven Celeste finally. Celeste grinned.

"I want to meet your family, if they're all like you three. They should be interesting. I'll trade families. You can have mine!" she said, smiling.

"No thanks," George said. "I think our'll do. No offense."

"None taken," Celeste said, grinning.

Pretty soon, the train began to slow down and everyone got their stuff together to leave. Celeste was the last person off the train.

"Well, I guess I can't avoid it. There's out chauffeur." She said, pointing. "Father never bothers to come himself, not that I'd want him to."

"Hey, Celeste," Lee called, rushing over. He handed her a bag. "I have some stuff you might find useful. Just tell me how it works out next September. He waved and rushed off to his own family, dreadlocks swirling around his head. Celeste waved back and opened the bag. In it were fireworks, st-ink pellets, as well as other things to liven up any time. She grinned.

"He thought of everything, didn't he?" she wondered out loud. Walking over to Hermione, she showed her her present." This should liven up my summer, but I'll still definantly take up your offer. I give you an owl when I desperately need escaping. See ya next year!" she said with a wave. It was going to be one summer.

A/N: I did it!!!!!!!!!!!!!! It's done. Sorry for the long wait, but I had writers block, and it had to be perfect. If anyone thinks I should write a sequel, reply. I've got one on mind, but I won't do it if I don't get lots of replies! So use that little box below and tell me what you think!!!! And to all those that think Hermione and Ron should be together, you're denying your inner Harry Potter-ness. Hermione and Harry are meant for each other, so get over it! The Malfoy's rock!!!!!!!!!!

Claimer/Disclaimer: If I owned these characters, would I be writing fanfiction? Please, I'd be much richer. I wish I did, but, alas, I don't. I do own Celeste, so don't take her un-allowed or face the consequences! (ignore the girl in the padded cell!) Even if I didn't say I don't own the others, I don't have anything worth suing me for anyway!

No Cornish pixies were hurt in the process of this story, but who would care of they were? Peace, love, and bullet-proof

marshmallows!!!

End  
file.